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THE ROLE OF QURAN AND SUNNAH IN SOLVING LEADERSHIP FAILURE

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Abstract

Leadership failure is one of the social injustice issues that are skyrocketing which has caused an immense impact on the social structure. Unfortunately, the role of the Quran and Sunnah in guiding the leadership path has been abandoned hence resulting in its crisis. Even though many scholars have provided the discussions of leadership's crisis solutions, most of them are secular in essence. Therefore, this qualitative study aims to provide solutions to leadership failure through the exploration of the divine revelation. This study utilises the content analysis method to collect data whereby it combines descriptive and analytical approaches. The result demonstrates that the Quran and Sunnah provide the best solution in solving leadership failure whereby they provide guidance to be a good leader for society so that a strong community will be built. The article unfolds five solutions, namely self-assessment before becoming a leader, selection of a highly virtuous individual as a leader, fair distribution of wealth and opportunities, implementation of a just retribution system, and providing equal rights to different levels of people. Hence, the study is significant in emphasising the roles of revelation that should not be abandoned due to the timeless characteristics of the Quran and Sunnah.

Keywords: Leadership in Islam, Social Justice, Leadership in Quran, Leadership in Sunnah

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a comprehensive religion as its messages do not only revolve around the external acts of worship but also elucidates pertaining the moral guidelines. The Quran, as the most referred source in Islam, mentions various verses in obeying the leaders for the sake of maintaining harmony in the society. The Quran records, “*O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best (way) and best in result*” (Surah an-Nisa’ 4: 59). In this verse, there is a commandment upon the believers to obey three parties includes Allah, the Prophets, and the authorities. However, as much as the people need to respect and obey the leaders, it is also a requisite for the leaders to rule and manage the trustees’ affairs with justice, wisdom, and efficiency.

As the most prominent Islamic model who translates the Quranic messages through his personality, Prophet Muhammad SAW exhibits the highest ethics and morality as a leader. His role in society exceeds the duty as a prophet and messenger as he is also a leader to the ummah, a loving father, a fair judge, and an ethical member of the community. As a leader, the Prophet, guided by the Quran, had exemplified a significant leadership style. From the Islamic perspective, the prophet’s leadership approach is termed as *Qudwah Hasanah*, which means a good example that needs to be followed (Jamsari et.al, 2012). Besides, the prophet also reminds people that everyone is a leader and is accountable for their actions. He mentioned in a hadith “*Surely! Every one of you is a guardian and is responsible for his charges: The Imam (ruler) of the people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; a man is the guardian of his family (household) and is responsible for his subjects; a woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them; and the slave of a man is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible for it. Surely, every one of you is a guardian and responsible for his charges.*” (Sahih al-Bukhari, 7138). Thus, the role of leadership is not determined by gender, social status, or the amount of wealth that one possesses, as everyone is considered a leader in certain affairs. People need to take accountability in leading people who have trusted them. They will be asked about the affairs on the judgement day, and it might be the reason they will go to paradise or hellfire, depending on their intentions, sincerity, and efficiency in managing the matters.

Functional leadership is fundamental in the growth, development, and positive changes in society. Good leaders demonstrate good leadership quality, exhibit fairness and equality in administering their matters, utilise peaceful and harmonious mediums to communicate regarding issues raised and possess a moral conscience in leading. In contrast, bad leadership is the agent of social injustice through the

systemic oppression towards the society, betrayal of trust of the people, suppression of freedom of speech, and the absence of ethical guidance in the ruling. Bad leaders are disastrous in the advancement of the state, organizations, and even family. If people follow the Quran and Sunnah guidelines, the leadership crisis can be treated and resolved. Hence, this study aims to explore the solutions for leadership failures in the light of divine revelations. The indicators of leadership failures will first be diagnosed. Sequentially, the prescription of this crisis from the Quran and through the practice of Prophet Muhammad SAW will be extracted and analysed. This qualitative study adopts the content analysis method in collecting the data, combining both analysis and description as its approaches. Results portrayed that the Quran and Sunnah provide multiple solutions in solving leadership problems.

LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM

Leadership in Islam must first be seen from the appointment of mankind as a vicegerent (*khalifah*) in this world “*And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority (khalifah) (Surah al-Baqarah 1: 30) whereby Allah has specifically lifted the status of mankind above all of his creations "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam". (Surah al-Isra': 70). Mankind was chosen by Allah to harmonize and to rule this world with justice and benevolence. Allah has given options to heaven, the earth, and the mountains to obtain the trust (amanah), yet they all feared the huge responsibility; thus, it was the man who dared to take it. "Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant". (Surah al-Ahzab 33:72)*

To see the translation of this commandment from the Quran into actions, Prophet Muhammad SAW was sent down as the blessings (*rahmah*) to mankind. He is the epitome of the Quranic messages that he is called a walking Quran. Not only is Prophet Muhammad a messenger, but he is also a leader to his community and a statesman. He executed good governance during his time through Islamic principles such as *amanah*, *‘adl*, and *ihsan* (Malik, 2015) which can be recognised as trust, justice and good benevolence, respectively.

A person who is *amanah* applies the self-awareness principle in his life to render the trust given, which emerges through the high level of *iman*. (Malik, 2015). The Prophet is the perfect example of a person who holds accountability in his entire life, even prior prophethood, that he was known as *al-Amin*, the trustworthy. Apart from that, being a leader also obligates the principle of justice to be applied in ruling as the Quranic instructs, “*Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct*” (Surah An-Nahl 16:90). The Prophet’s leadership qualities include realism, firm belief in his

mission, courage, strong willpower, responsibility awareness, eagle-eyed and goal-oriented, knowledge of the followers, charismatic and praiseworthy virtues, and absence of worldly ambitions (al-Olaqi, 2015). Thus, it is incumbent for us to imitate these qualities and adopt them in our life as he is the best example in Islam.

Adherence to the state leader is part of the obligation to God. If a state leader is elected legally and appropriately, the loyalty of the citizens falls upon them. If the government fulfils the rights and necessities of its citizens according to *shari'ah*, it is obligated for the citizens to obey the government's ordinance (Al-Mawardi, 2017). There are three rights of the government from its citizens. The government has the right to 1) impose taxes that they find important for the sake of the welfare of the citizens 2) place constraints on certain personal belongings, properties or natural resources in order to be managed as public utilities and 3) command the citizens with physical health and strength to perform military service in protecting the country (Asad, 2019).

Excellent leadership will boost the pride in every citizen, enhance their enthusiasm to contribute to the society, holds a high moral and ethics, and cultivate love, peace, and harmony among its citizens. In contrast, poor leadership will result in the people's suffering and the country's downfall economically, politically, and morally. Moreover, it will lead to huge polarization where the wealthy are getting wealthier, and the poor are getting poorer. Therefore, it is incumbent for a country to possess strong leadership by electing the most suitable leaders.

METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative in nature, based on the document analysis from the Quran and Sunnah. It combines the descriptive and analytical approaches in its data analysis. In the data collection phase, several indicators of leadership failures were collected from various sources such as relatable journal articles or books. Sequentially, the solutions for the leadership crisis indicators were analysed from the Quranic verses and books of hadith such as *Kutub Sittah*, which assembles the hadith of the prophet. Besides that, supporting sources like books of Quranic exegesis (*tafsir al-Quran*) and books of hadith commentaries (*sharh al-Hadith*) were also used.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result demonstrates that the indicators of leadership failures include the absence of justice, discrimination based on physical appearances, gender, abilities, race, religion, and language, and the poor economy, resulting in the suffering of the citizens. Apart from that, solution and guidance were also given in this study whereby it has been found that the solutions can be of several, namely self-

assessment prior to the entitlement of a leader, selection of a good and capable leader, and providing equal rights to everyone regardless of gender, race, religion, social status, language, and others.

Solution and Guidance from Quran and Sunnah

1. Self-assessment prior becoming a leader

Self-assessment of being a leader is vital to avoid an unfit person becoming a leader. A person needs to be morally conscious to diagnose himself whether he can hold a position in any cabinet ministry or organisation. The concept of 'ahl' is very important before holding a leadership position. Critical self-examination, which involves being true to themselves and accepting only the duty he can bear, needs to be carried out before undertaking any burden of trust offered. This is because, academic certification, privileged status, social rank, or titles without intellectual and moral integrity are inadequate for the responsibilities and accountabilities to be placed on a person (al-Attas, 2020).

In other words, since the responsibility and duties will be questioned on the day of judgement thus, to prevent a person from falling into the trap of hellfire due to the failure in leadership, it is an obligation for them to do a prior self-assessment before accepting any responsibility.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ تَبَيَّنَمَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي مَجْلِسٍ يُحَدِّثُ الْقَوْمَ جَاءَهُ أَعْرَابِيٌّ فَقَالَ مَتَى السَّاعَةُ فَمَضَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُحَدِّثُ، فَقَالَ بَعْضُ الْقَوْمِ سَمِعَ مَا قَالَ، فَكَّرَهُ مَا قَالَ، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَلْ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ، حَتَّى إِذَا قَضَى حَدِيثَهُ قَالَ " أَتَيْنَ - أَرَاهُ - السَّائِلُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ ". قَالَ هَا أَنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. قَالَ " فَإِذَا ضَيَّعَتِ الْأَمَانَةُ فَانْتَظِرِ السَّاعَةَ ". قَالَ كَيْفَ إِصْغَاعُهَا قَالَ " إِذَا وَبَدَ الْأَمْرُ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ فَانْتَظِرِ السَّاعَةَ "

Narrated Abu Huraira:

While the Prophet (ﷺ) was saying something in a gathering, a Bedouin came and asked him, "When would the Hour (Doomsday) take place?" Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) continued his talk, so some people said that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) had heard the question, but did not like what that Bedouin had asked. Some of them said that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) had not heard it. When the Prophet (ﷺ) finished his speech, he said, "Where is the questioner, who inquired about the Hour (Doomsday)?" The Bedouin said, "I am here, O Allah's Apostle ." Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour (Doomsday)." The Bedouin said, "How will that be lost?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "When the power or authority comes in the hands of unfit persons, then wait for the Hour (Doomsday.)" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 59)

A person who asked about the exact timeline of the day of judgement was replied by The Prophet that it will occur when the honesty is lost. He then further described that it will be lost when an unfit person comes to power or authority. A leader must

not feel that he is obligated to hold the position due to the majority's decision appointing them as a leader if he is aware he is unable to fulfil the responsibility, does not possess enough knowledge in managing the situations, and does not own moral capacity and integrity to lead. This way is better and just for himself and to the people who elected him beforehand as he knows himself better than those people.

2. Selection of a strong and highly moral person as the leader

Self-assessment is a guidance for an individual prior to taking any responsibility. Similarly, citizens are also responsible to make the right choices, based on the guidelines outlined from the Quran and Sunnah, when selecting a leader to prevent the leadership failure of a country or an organization. From the hadith of Abu Dzar, the Prophet indirectly emphasizes the importance of choosing a strong person with good character as a leader.

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ ، قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا تَسْتَعْمَلُنِي قَالَ فَضْرَبَ بِيَدِهِ عَلَى مَنْكِبِي ثُمَّ قَالَ " يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنَّكَ ضَعِيفٌ وَإِنَّهَا أمانةٌ وَإِنَّهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ جُزْءٌ وَنَدَامَةٌ إِلَّا مَنْ أَخَذَهَا بِحَقِّهَا وَأَدَّى الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا "

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Dzar who said: I said to the Prophet (ﷺ): Messenger of Allah, will you not appoint me to a public office? He stroked my shoulder with his hand and said: Abu Dzar, you are weak and authority is a trust. and on the Day of judgment, it is a cause of humiliation and repentance except for one who fulfils its obligations and (properly) discharges the duties attendant thereon. (Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 1825)

In this hadith, the Prophet indirectly advised Abu Dzar not to seek any appointment of position as he is a weak person. It is pivotal to be reminded that Abu Dzar asked the Prophet for a position due to his internal purity of wanting to do public service to get closer to Allah (Suleiman, 2021). However, despite his integrity and purity, he is encouraged not to hold the position due to the absence of leadership's strength. It is implied here that strong is an essential criterion for one to be elected as a leader even if the weak person possesses inner purity and high integrity. This means that an effective leader is a combination of physical, mental, and spiritual strength. A strong and charismatic leader will be respected and honoured by the citizens regardless of their differences in views on certain issues. A strong leader is capable of communicating, negotiating, and providing the best solution to the issues faced; thus, making him/herself admired and respected.

3. Fair distribution of wealth and opportunities

One of the indicators of good leaders in a country is their ability to provide fair distribution of wealth and opportunities to its citizens. In Malaysia, the objectives of

development philosophy of distributional growth are removing poverty and reducing economic imbalances between different races across regions. However, despite the poverty decrement from 49.3% in 1970 to 0.4% in 2014, large economic inequality still exists today (Tey et al., 2019). It gives a signal that Malaysia needs a stronger and a more capable leaders to solve the economic injustice.

A fair and just leader will ensure that the wealth and opportunities are divided fairly beyond the race and ethnic. Besides, the citizens need to be encouraged and allowed to be involved in trading and expand the business through various means without exploiting others. Taxes are allowed to be collected if it is for the development of the societies (Hasan, 2007). With good leadership, a leader can instil social responsibility in citizen's hearts by providing the best distribution to the needy through the means of *zakat* and others. Allah abhors stingy and self-centred people, and they are prepared with a humiliating punishment in the hereafter. Most commonly, excessive accumulated wealth is the result of oppression, and Allah prohibits the act of oppression onto people.

الَّذِينَ يَبِخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبَخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا

37. Who are stingy and enjoin upon [other] people stinginess and conceal what Allah has given them of His bounty - and We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment (Surah an-Nisa' 4:37)

Apart from that, in the same surah, Allah mentions the forbiddance of oppressing other people by consuming other people's wealth but instructs people to conduct by mutual consent. This commandment is to avoid any form of exploitation that could take place.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبُطْلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجْرَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا!

29. O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful. (Surah An-Nisa' 4:29)

According to Syed Qutb (2015), it is addressed to the believers to remove the remnants of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) that casually practice exploitation in their business. In addition, "to consume one another's wealth" refers to the transaction that is prohibited by Allah, such as cheating, extreme price increment, corruption, and usury (*riba*'). The wisdom behind its forbiddance is to safeguard the rights of everyone, especially those who are seemingly weaker and less powerful. As the

leaders who hold power and authority, it is incumbent for them to ensure distributive justice is implemented and promote the culture of empathy in society.

4. Implementation of a just retribution system

Retributive justice is one of the elements that needs to be highlighted when we are discussing leadership. It is prerequisite to judge with justice between people as supposed to preference based on kinship, political views, social ranking, or wealth status. Allah mentions in the Quran,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا !

58. Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing. (Surah an-Nisa' 4: 58)

In elucidating the concept of “*hakama*” which is the root word derived from the word “*tahkumu*” in mentioned verse, Al-Attas (2020) mentioned that ‘*hakama*’ in the context of community-state related refers to prudential judgment by the judge. On the other hand, in the context of a mediator, ‘*hakama*’ refers to an individual who is knowledgeable and of moral character to handle conflicts in different matters such as private, family, domestic, or transactions. A judge or mediator is responsible for the parties who appointed them and accountable to Allah for their just or unjust actions.

Apart from that, as mentioned above, fair judgements should be executed regardless of kinship or other factors. The Prophet PBUH translated this ordainment from Allah through the following hadith:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ فَرَيْثًا، أَهَمَّهُمْ شَأْنُ الْمَرْأَةِ الْمَخْزُومِيَّةِ الَّتِي سَرَقَتْ فَقَالُوا مَنْ يُكَلِّمُ فِيهَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا وَمَنْ يَجْتَرِئُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا أُسَامَةُ جِبِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ . فَكَلَّمَهُ أُسَامَةُ . فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَتَسْفَعُ فِي حَدِّ مِنْ حُدُودِ اللَّهِ " . ثُمَّ قَامَ فَاخْتَطَبَ فَقَالَ " أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا هَلَاكُ الَّذِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا سَرَقَ فِيهِمُ الشَّرِيفُ تَرَكَوهُ وَإِذَا سَرَقَ فِيهِمُ الضَّعِيفُ أَقَامُوا عَلَيْهِ الْحَدَّ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَوْ أَنَّ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ سَرَقَتْ لَقَطَعْتُ يَدَهَا " . وَفِي حَدِيثِ ابْنِ رُمَحٍ " إِنَّمَا هَلَاكُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ " .

'A'isha reported that the Quraish was anxious about the Makhzumi woman who had committed theft, and said: “Who will speak to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about her? They said: Who dare it, but Usama, the loved one of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)? So Usama spoke to him. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: Do you intercede

regarding one of the punishments prescribed by Allah? He then stood up and addressed (people) saying: O people, those who have gone before you were destroyed, because if any one of high rank committed theft amongst them, they spared him; and if anyone of low rank committed theft, they inflicted the prescribed punishment upon him. By Allah, if Fatima, daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would have her hand cut off. In the hadith transmitted on the authority of Ibn Rumh (the words are):" Verily those before you perished." (Sahih Muslim 1688).

The Prophet, our greatest compass in life, conveys the Quranic messages by strictly warning unfair judgment based on the elitist privileges in terms of social status. In the book of hadith commentary, *'Umdah al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, al-Aini (2006) explains that the woman mentioned in this hadith is a woman named Fatimah binti Aswad from Bani Makhzum. She was from one of the most elite and powerful tribe in Makkah; the tribe was highly privileged and was not used to being held accountable for their actions. However, on one occasion, Fatimah binti Aswad was caught stealing. Usamah bin Zaid, a wise young man, came to the Prophet to ask about this matter. The Prophet strictly explained that the status quo is not accepted even if his own daughter is involved with the act of stealing. He would dare cut her hand to execute the ruling of Allah and that the father-daughter relationship does not exempt her from being punished if she was found guilty.

A just leader needs to ensure that fair treatment is implemented without the privilege of social or economic status. Therefore, the tradition of current societies who love to use their connection to bypass many matters needs to be abolished. The law needs to be applied fairly to everybody, and the systemic oppression as well as privileges need to be removed.

5. Providing equal rights to different levels of people

A strong, capable, and just leader should render equal rights to different levels of people despite their different abilities, genders, and social or economic rankings. It is the leader's responsibility to emphasize this matter to the society by walking the talk through the implementation of appropriate facilities and treatment to the different communities. For instance, fair opportunity should be given to the community with different abilities so that they can enjoy similar benefits like the physically and mentally healthy people. The following Quranic verse explains the admonition of Allah upon Prophet Muhammad SAW with regards to his treatment towards a visually impaired companion named Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum.

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ! أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ! وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهٗ يَرْكَبُ ! أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الْذِكْرُ ! أَمَّا مَنْ أَسْتَعْتَى !

1. The Prophet frowned and turned away 2. Because there came to him the blind man, [interrupting]. 3. But what would make you perceive, [O Muhammad], that perhaps he might be purified 4. Or be reminded and the remembrance would benefit him? 5. As for he who thinks himself without need (Surah Abasa 80:1-5)

The verses describe Rasulullah’s treatment towards a blind companion who came to him to acquire knowledge about Islam in the presence of the Quraisy leaders. The Prophet was directing his focus towards the influential Quraisy leaders in his attempt to spread Islam to them. He frowned and turned away from Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum when he approached and asked the Prophet, “Teach me from what Allah has taught you”. Though Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum was unable to see the frowning of the Prophet, his action received disapproval from Allah al-Basir, the All-Seeing. However, through this revelation, Allah wanted the Prophet to comprehend that Abdullah’s spirituality and access to knowledge should not be abandoned even though his benefit to society might be limited. After the event, the Prophet greeted him and treated him better by ensuring he never felt excluded. Abdullah was even appointed as the caller to prayer (*muazzin*) in Islam. This event indicates that equal treatment and opportunities should be given to disabled people in all spectrums of life, including education. A disabled person should not be deprived of spiritual purification; hence, suitable facilities should be made accessible for them not only in the mosque, but also in other public places.

Apart from the right to the disabled community, equal rights should also be provided to both genders - male and female. Allah has created both genders with their own unique roles to complement each other. The commandment with regards to the purpose of life which is to worship Allah is not targeted only towards certain gender. Women can even lead nation to prosperity as there is no clear cut prohibition against women as heads of political institutions (Salaudeen & Ahmad Dukawa 2021). Besides, Allah also mentions that the closest individual to Him is the one who has the highest *taqwa* (God-conscious behaviour) without specifying the gender.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ !

71. The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give *zakah* and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (Surah at-Taubah 9:71)

The verse stresses the importance of both genders in the act of ‘*amal bilma’ruf* and *nahy ‘anilmunkar* (enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong). Both genders

complement each other, and Allah purposely created them to be different in order to beautify this world with His blessings and mercy. Therefore, as a leader that is living in the age of gender injustice, opportunities need to be given to both genders in propagating the knowledge and harmonizing this world in the way Allah pleases.

Apart from the equal rights and opportunities for both genders, equal rights should also be given to all tribes, races, skin colours, and languages as mankind is equal in the eyes of Allah except by piety and good actions. The Prophet SAW emphasizes this notion in his last sermon,

“All humankind is from Adam a.s and Hawa a.s. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor a black has any superiority over a white - except by piety and good action.”

The superiority of a person according to Allah’s perspectives depends on their God-conscious behaviour (*taqwa*) and manners and not by physical appearances such as race, tribe, or skin colour. A black, non-Arab female might be closer to Allah than a white, Arab male if that individual develops a strong relationship with Allah through her *‘ibadah* and good manners. Hence, a good and just leader should be well informed of this notion and strive to provide the best treatment to every group of people.

CONCLUSION

Leadership failure is a crucial issue to be discussed due to its massive impacts on society. Poor social skills, weak economic sector, absence of justice, and discrimination based on race, skin colour, gender, and abilities are among the signs of leadership failure. A failed leader would condone these problems to happen without structuring proper measurements. This study found out that al-Quran and al-Sunnah provide the solutions for a leadership crisis. Five key elements based on the presented divine revelations have been analysed, which are self-assessment prior to becoming a leader, selection of a strong and a highly moral person as a leader, fair distribution of wealth and opportunities, implementation of a just retribution system, and providing equal rights to different levels of people.

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